

operates feebly; you will not see the process in children, nor the result in mature persons. That significance is unfelt, which belongs to the beauties of nature as something more than their being merely objects of the senses. And in many instances even the senses themselves are so deficient in attention, so idly passive, and therefore apprehend these objects so slightly, undefinedly, and transiently, that it is no wonder the impressions do not go so much deeper than the senses as to infuse a mood of sentiment, awaken the mind to thoughtful and imaginative action, and form in it an order of feelings and ideas congenial with what is fair and great in external nature. This defect of sensibility and fancy is unfortunate amidst a creation infinitely rich with grand and beautiful objects, which can impart to a mind adapted and habituated to converse with nature an exquisite sentiment, that seems to come as by an emanation from a spirit dwelling in those objects. It is unfortunate I have thought within these few minutes—while looking out on one of the most enchanting nights of the most interesting season of the year, and hearing the voices of a company of persons, to whom I can perceive that this soft and solemn shade over the earth, the calm sky, the beautiful stripes of cloud, the stars, the waning moon just risen, are things not in the least more interesting than the walls, ceiling, and candle-light of a room. I feel no vanity in this instance ; for perhaps a thousand aspects of night not less striking than this, have appeared before my eyes and departed, not only without awaking emotion, but almost without attracting notice.

If minds in general are not made to be strongly affected by the phenomena of the earth and heavens, they are however all subject to be powerfully influenced by the appearances and character of the *human* world. I suppose a child in Switzerland, growing up to a man, would have acquired incomparably more of the cast of his mind from the events, manners, and actions of the next village, though its inhabitants were but his occasional companions, than from all the mountain scenes, the cataracts, and every circumstance of beauty or sublimity in nature around him. We are all true to our species, and very soon feel its importance to us, (though benevolence be not the basis of the interest,) far beyond the importance of anything that we see besides. Beginning your observation with children,